

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for allowing a TV user to receive programs desired by said user, said method comprising the steps of:
accepting from said user information pertaining to a program desired to be viewed by said user;
matching by other than said user, said accepted information against a list of known programs currently scheduled to be delivered; and
informing said user as to when said programs will be delivered.
2. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:
allowing said user to receive said programs at the informed time.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein said program information is selected from the list including future programs, past programs, past events, program concepts, biographies, actors, travelogues, subject matter, movies, concerts, performers, time frames, sitcoms, sports, affinity programs, historical figures, news events, programs not yet scheduled.
4. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:
upon a non-match condition making said user request available to at least one content provider.
5. The method of claim 4 further comprising the step of:
delivering programs to said user from said content provider which match said accepted descriptive material.
6. The method of claim 4 further comprising the step of:
interacting between said at least one content provider and said user to deliver content containing said descriptive material to said user.
7. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:
upon a non-match condition continuing by other than said user to match said accepted information against future lists of programs scheduled to be delivered.

8. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:
upon a non-match condition continuing by other than said user to match said accepted information against possible future programs not yet scheduled.
9. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:
enabling a recorder at said user's location to record said programs when matched ones of said programs are delivered to said user.
10. The method of claim 9 further comprising the step of:
adjusting the timing of said recording in accordance with the location of said user.
11. The method of claim 9 further comprising the step of:
adjusting the recording time at said user's location in accordance with information concerning the actual transmission times of programs being recorded.
12. The method of claim 1 wherein said matching step includes the step of:
comparing a program provider's identity against a permission level set by said TV user.
13. The method of claim 1 wherein said matching step includes the step of:
interacting with said user.
14. The method of claim 1 wherein said accepting step includes the step of:
accepting said program information over a network separate from the network used to deliver said desired program.
15. The method of claim 1 wherein said informing step include, the step of:
informing said user via an electronic message communicated separate from the network used to deliver said desired program.

16. A system for delivering entertainment programs to a user, said system comprising:

means for allowing said user to input and store desired programs;

means independent from said user's content for determining which, if any, of said stored desired programs are currently available to said user; and

means controlled in part by said determining means for informing said user that one or more of said stored desired programs are currently available and for subsequently informing said viewer that desired programs which were determined not to have been currently available to said user have become available.

17. The system of claim 16 wherein said determining means includes:

means for allowing at least one program provider to review determined unavailable desired programs to determine if said program provider can deliver to said user one or more of said unavailable desired stored programs.

18. The system of claim 17 wherein said informing means is at a first location and said program provider is at a second location remote from said informing means.

19. The system of claim 16 wherein said programs are selected from the list including future programs, past programs, past events, program concepts, biographies, actors, travelogues, subject matter, movies, concerts, performers, time frames, sitcoms, sports, affinity programs, historical figures, news events.

20. The system of claim 16 further including:

means for controlling recording times of delivered ones of said desired programs in accordance with the actual delivered time of such program at a user's location.

21. A method for allowing a TV user to receive programs desired by said user, said method comprising:

recording, under control of said user, requests pertaining to a program desired to be viewed by said user; said desired programs not necessarily currently scheduled, either as stand-alone programs or programs which are part of a series, for availability to said user;

accessing recorded ones of said requests by other than said user;

determining, at least in part independent of control by said user, whether or not a program corresponding to an accessed request is currently scheduled so as to be available for delivery to said user; and

informing said user as to the availability of an accessed request.

22. The method of claim 21 further comprising:

allowing said user to receive said corresponding programs when said corresponding programs are determined to be available for delivery to said user.

23. The method of claim 21 wherein said requests pertain to programs selected from the list including: future programs, past programs, past events, program concepts, biographies, actors, travelogues, subject matter, movies, concerts, performers, time frames, sitcoms, sports, affinity programs, historical figures, news events, programs not yet scheduled.

24. The method of claim 21 further comprising:

upon a determination that there are no currently scheduled programs matching an accessed request, making said user request available to at least one content provider.

25. The method of claim 24 further comprising:

allowing said user to receive said corresponding programs when said corresponding programs are determined to be available for delivery to said user from at least of said content providers.

26. The method of claim 25 further comprising:

interacting between said at least one content provider and said user to deliver to said user said corresponding program.

27. The method of claim 21 further comprising:
upon a determination that there are no currently scheduled programs matching an accessed request, continuing to repeat for a period of time said accessing, determining and informing steps.
28. The method of claim 27 further comprising:
enabling a recorder at said user's location to record programs when a match is determined with a subsequently scheduled program.
29. The method of claim 21 wherein said informing step comprises:
enabling a recorder at said user's location to record programs which are determined to be available for delivery to said user.
30. The method of claim 29 further comprising:
adjusting the timing of said recording in accordance with the location of the user.
31. The method of claim 29 further comprising:
adjusting the recording time duration in accordance with information concerning the actual transmission times of programs being recorded.

32. A system for delivery of TV programs to a viewer, said system comprising:
memory for storing from a desiring viewer information pertaining to the delivery by a provider of one or more programs corresponding to desired programs, said desired programs not necessarily being scheduled, either as stand-alone or as part of a series, for availability to said desiring viewer at the time said information is received from said desiring viewer; and
a processor for comparing stored ones of said viewer information against program content information as said program content information becomes available to determine matches therebetween.

33. The system of claim 32 wherein at least one of said memory or said processor is at a location remote from said desiring viewer.

34. The system of claim 33 wherein at least one of said memory or said processor is operable to handle multiple desiring viewers.

35. The system of claim 31 wherein said processor is further operable in response to a determined match for enabling a recorder to capture said matched program content.

36. The system of claim 33 wherein said processor is further operable for adjusting the time span of said recorder in accordance with the running time of said program.

37. The system of claim 33 wherein said recorder is enabled at a location specified by said desiring viewer, said specified location not necessarily being located at the location of said desiring viewer when said desiring viewer stores said viewed information.

38. The system of claim 32 wherein said processor is further operable in response to a determined match for informing said desiring viewer of said match when said match has been determined.

39. A system for delivery of TV programs to a viewer, said system comprising:
a communication link from a desiring viewer;
memory accessible over said communication link by a plurality of desiring viewers for storing from any one or more said desiring viewers information pertaining to the delivery of one or more desired programs, said delivery to a location specified by each said desiring viewer;
a processor for comparing stored ones of said viewer information against program content information as said program content information becomes available to determine matches therebetween on a viewer by viewer basis; and
wherein said processor is further operable in response to a determined match for individually informing each said viewer as to matches relevant to said viewer.
40. The system of claim 39 wherein said processor is further operable for individually informing each said viewer as to the times of said program, said program, said time information being adjusted for the location of said viewer.
41. The system of claim 39 wherein said processor is further operable for individually informing each said viewer as to the time span of said program.
42. The system of claim 39 wherein said processor is further operable for providing individual viewer recorder enable signals so that said program is recorded at the location specified by said desiring viewer.
43. The system of claim 39 wherein said individually informing comprises:
establishing a time span for a recorder at a viewer location so that said recorder can record said matched desired program.
44. The system of claim 43 wherein said establishing comprises:
adjusting a time span of an already set recorder at said viewer's locations in accordance with the time span of said desired program.

45. A method for controlling TV program recording by a viewer, said method comprising:

storing programs desired by said viewer;

matching, under control independent of said viewer, program content being delivered to said viewer; and

adjusting a time span of a recorder enabled to record said program content, said adjusting being in accordance with an actual program time span.

46. The method of claim 45 wherein said adjusting comprises adjustments selected from the list of; change of start time, change of run time, changes prior to the start of said program; change in run-time occurring after said program starts.